

Message Text

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44-S

ACTION ARA-06

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5785

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 7819

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CASC, CI

SUBJ: TEMPORARY REFUGE: SISTER BERNADETTE THERESA BALLASTY AND
MISS KATHLEEN MARIE OSBERGER

REF: A) SANTIAGO 7327 B) STATE 262289 C) STATE 273526

1. EVENING NOV 18 MARYKNOLL SISTERS CAME TO HOME OF EMBOFF
AND URGENTLY REQUESTED THAT EMBASSY SPEAK TO ABOVE NAMED
PERSONS. SISTER BALLASTY (KNOWN AS SISTER BRIGID) IS MEMBER OF
SCHOOL SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME, AND MISS OSBERGER IS A UNIVERSITY
OF NOTRE DAME GRADUATE STUDENT TEACHING AND TAKING COURSES IN
SANTIAGO UNDER AUSPICES OF HOLY CROSS ORDER. MARYKNOLL NUNS SAID
THEY HAD JUST BEEN CALLED ON BY JESUIT PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR, WHO
TOLD THEM HE HAD RECEIVED WORD FROM DETAINED CHILEAN PRIESTS
INDICATING THAT AMCITS WERE BEING ACTIVELY SOUGHT BY SECURITY
FORCES.

2. EMBOFF INTERVIEWED AMCITS AND ASCERTAINED THAT BOTH HAD
BEEN INVOLVED WITH OTHER NOTRE DAME AND MARYKNOLL NUNS IN
HARBORING FUGITIVE LEADERS OF MOVEMENT OF REVOLUTIONARY LEFT
(MIR)--REF B. SISTER BRIGID STATED SHE HAD BEEN PRESENT
IN NOTRE DAME HOME DURING PERIOD OCT 20 THROUGH 24, WHEN
MIR LEADER NELSON GUTIERREZ AND TWO FEMALE MIRISTAS WERE
HARBORED IN THE HOUSE. MISS OSBERGER SAID SHE HAD SPENT
NIGHT OF OCT 20 IN NOTRE DAME HOUSE AND KNEW OF MIRISTAS'
ENTRY INTO HOUSE. MISS OSBERGER MORNING NOV 2 HAD BEEN
BRIEFLY DETAINED BY GOC FORCES IN ATTEMPT TO LOCATE NOTRE
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DAME NUNS (REF A).

3. BOTH CITIZENS SAID THEY HAD INDEPENDENTLY DECIDES TO LEAVE CHILE AS SOON AS PRACTICABLE. SISTER BRIGID WAS MAKING ARRANGEMENTS THROUGH LOCAL TRAVEL AGENCY FOR BRANIFF FLIGHT NOV 20 TO MIAMI. MISS OSBERGER WANTED TO LEAVE AT SAME TIME FOR LIMA, WHERE SHE HOPED TO CONTINUE HER STUDIES AND WORK, OR RETURN TO CHILE. THEY SAID THAT INFORMATION GIVEN BY JESUIT TO MARYKNOLL SISTERS MADE THEM FEAR FOR THEIR LIVES AND SAFETY, AND THEY REQUESTED EMBOFF TO GRANT THEM IMMEDIATE TEMPORARY REFUGE FOR HUMANITARIAN REASONS. THEY STATED FURTHER THAT THEIR COOPERATION IN SHELTERING (IN SISTER BRIGID'S CASE) OR WITHHOLDING INFORMATION ON FUGITIVE MIRISTAS (MISS OSBERGER'S CASE) WAS EXTENDED FOR PURELY HUMANITARIAN PURPOSES AND WITH NO POLITICAL INTENTIONS. ALTHOUGH THEY HAD NO SPECIFIC INFORMATION INDICATING THEY WERE BEING SOUGHT BY GOC SECURITY FORCES, THEY FEARED THAT THEY MIGHT BE, AND WISHED TO SEEK EMBASSY PROTECTION UNTIL THEY COULD LEAVE CHILE.

4. EMBOFF EXPLAINED PROVISIONS OF 2 FAM 228.3 AND OTHER DETAILS OF TEMPORARY REFUGE THAT MIGHT BE APPROPRIATE TO CASE (AS EMBASSY HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED IN REF B IN SIMILAR CASES). HE ALSO SAID THAT IN INFORMING FONMINISTRY THAT EMBASSY HAD OFFERED IMMEDIATE TEMPORARY REFUGE, EMBASSY WOULD ASK MINISTRY IF IT COULD ASCERTAIN WHETHER WARRANTS EXISTED FOR TWO AMERICANS, AND IF NOT WHETHER MINISTRY COULD ASSURE EMBASSY THEY COULD LEAVE CHILE WITHOUT HINDRANCE. THEY WERE INFORMED ALSO THAT IF THEY WRE SOUGHT BY GOC AUTHORITIES, AT BEST EMBASSY WOULD HAVE TO GO THROUGH PROCEDURE SIMILAR TO THAT USED WITH PREVIOUS CASES. CITIZENS UNDERSTOOD, AGREED TO THIS PROCEDURE, WERE OFFERED REFUGE, AND WERE PLACED IN A BUILDING ENJOYING DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY.

5. EMBASSY IS PROCEEDING WITH FONMINISTRY AS INDICATED.

6. DEPT MAY WISH TO INFORM SCHOOL SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME (REF C) OF STATUS OF SISTER BRIGID'S CASE, AND THAT SHE IS IN GOOD CONDITION.

7. MISS OSBERGER'S BIO INFORMATION WAS GIVEN IN REF A. SISTER BRIGID WAS BORN IN NEW YORK CITY OCTOBER 3, 1935. SHE HAS
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BEEN IN CHILE SINCE 1970.
THOMPSON

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